(b) if so, whether India's ranking has slipped from 49 to 56 in 2003;

(c) if so, whether Government have assessed the cause of such fall in ranking; and

(d) if so, the findings thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) and (b) A globalization index published by AT. Kearney and Foreign Policy Magazine in January 2003 has ranked India at 56, behind Bangladesh (54) and Pakistan (50). It had ranked India at No. 49 in 2002.

(c) and (d) The methodology used does not fully capture the complexities of globalisation, nor does the ranking measure the overall competitiveness of the economies concerned.

Projects with neighbouring countries

3637. SHRI RISHANG KEISHING: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government, with a view to strenghten friendship and understanding with the immediate neighbouring countries, have taken up and executed some development schemes or projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise;

(c) whether some more projects are proposed to be implemented; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, country-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) The Government attaches highest importance to strenghening of friendly relations and promoting understanding with neighbouring countries. As part of this policy, the Government has undertaken several development projects in our neighbourhood. Country-wise details of the projects are as follows:

1. Afghanistan:

Health

Assistance is being provided for the rehabilitation of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH).

A team of 13 Indian doctors and paramedics have been working at Kabul since November 2001. The team is attending hundres of patients daily and disbursing medicines at the polyclinic (OPD) of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH). The Indian Medical team is also running an Operation Theatre at the Kho-e-Markaz Hospital in Kabul.

A 6-member team of Indian doctors and paramedics is running an Operation Theatre at the Civil Hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif since April 2002.

An artifical limb/Jaipur foot fitment camp was set up for Afghan amputees at Kabul military hospital in January 2002. Nearly 1000 artificial limbs were fitted during the camp. Another artificial limb fitment camp was set up from October 21-December 4, 2002 at Mazar-e-Sharif and Meymaneh fitting around 600 artificial limbs. During the camp, training was also provided to eight local artisans on the artificial limb maintenance. On conclusion of the camp, the fitment centre alongwith tools, machinery and raw materials was handed over to the Afghan authorities and named as Indo-Afghan Rehabilitation Centre in Mazar-e-Sharif. A large number of rehabilitation aids like wheel chairs, crutches, hearing aids, audiometers were also gifted.

Six Afghan doctors and paramedics from India Gandhi Institute of Child Health attended training in areas of their specialisation at All India Institute of Medical Sciences from August 19-November 18, 2002.

Civil Aviation (Aircrafts, Spares and Services)

51 Ariana Afghan Airlines officials have been trained by Air India.

Education

Assistance is being provided for the reconstruction of Habibia School.

Two English language Instructors have been teaching English at the Institute of Diplomacy since February 2002 to around 180 officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other Government Departments of Afghanistan.

Two additional English language teachers have been deputed to Kabul from March 2003 to teach English at the Ministries of Information and Culture and Labour and Social Welfare.

Culture, Heritage, Media, Sport

A Cash grant of US $ 20,000 for repair of Shrine of Hazrat Ali in Mazar-e-Sharif has been made in September 2002.

A team from the Ministry of I&B has visited Kabul and submitted a feasibility study for rehabilitation of some of I&B facilities in Afghanistan.

Information Technology

A LAN network with Internet access via VSAT was established alongwith supply of necessary equipment in the office of the Foreign Minister of Interim Administration of Afghanistan. The LAN has been extended to additional twenty nodes alongwith supply of necessary equipment.

A computer-training centre was setup in Kabul from July 02-January 03 for providing computer training to Afghan officials. The Centre was handed over to the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs in January 2003.

Infrastructure Development

Water Resources

WAPCOS has conducted detailed Project Reports on rehabilitation of Mini/Micro hydro projects, Khanabad Irrigation Project, Quargha reservoir and Amir Ghazi Dam.

Industry

A team from Ministry of Small Scale Industries and NSIC has visited Afghanistan and carried out feasibility study for rehabilitation of Industrial Park in Kabul.

II. Bhutan:

Projects completed in Bhutan with GOI assistance include Paro Airport Bhutan Broadcasting Station, Major Highways, Electricity Distribution Systems, Telecom Microwave Links, Exploration of Mineral Resources, Survey and Mapping and renovation of Dzong at Punakha, education infrastructure and construction of mini-hydels projects. Some of the Projects currently under discussion are: Eastern Transmission Grid, Sub Transmission and Distribution system between Paro and Thimphu, construction of Pasakha-Manitar by-pass road, upgradation of National Hospital at Thimphu and Regional Referral Hospital at Monger in Eastern Bhutan.

In addition, GOI have undertaken mega projects such as the 336 MW Chukha and 60 MW Kurichu Hydel Projects (completed), and the on going 1020 MW Tala Hydel Project. Penden Cement Plant with 300 tonnes capacity was completed in 1982 with GOI assistance.

III. Bangladesh

India is gifting 10 ambulances to Bangladesh.

IV. Maldives:

The 200-bed Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH) was set up in Male 1995 at a cost of about Rs. 40 crores.

(i) The Maldives Institute of Technical Education (MITE), a Rs. 10 crore Project was set up by India and handed over to Maldives in September, 1996.

(ii) India has agreed to assist in setting up of a Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies with an assistance of Rs. 21 crore. The fundation stone was laid by Prime Minister during his visit to Maldives in September, 2002.

V. Myanmar

(i) Upgradation ofTarnu-Kalernyo-Kalewa Road—This road was upgraded by India (Border Roads Organisation) and handed over to the Myanmar authorities in February 2001 at a formal inauguration, ft helps in providing connectivity and enhancing trade and commercial activities in the border region.

(ii) Kaladan multi-modal transport project—The first phase of the project consists of upgradation of poret of Sittwe, navigability of river Kaladan till Kaletwa. The second phase involves for the development of highway from Kaletwa to Indo-Myanmar border at Mizoram. RITES has completed a survey of the bi-Chin hills in Myanmar into Mizoram and then, south wards from Myanmar entering Bay of Bengal at Sittwe port. A RITES team is currently in Myanmar to continue work on survey of the Highway. The interim DPR has been submitted by RITES. The final DPR is expected at the end of this year.

(i) Tamanthi-Hydel project—The Myanmar side has proposed a Hydel Project on the Chindwin rover system at Tamanthi in

Myanmar across the Nagaland border. This may have a potential of generating between 600 to 1000 mgwts of electricity with most the power sold to india as Tamanthi is only 80 kms from the border. 3 gauge and discharge sites (G and D) have been established by WAPCOS and data is being collected. Proposal is being processed for undertaking a feasibility study in Myanmar.

(iv) Trilateral Highway Project—The first Ministerial meeting between India, Myanmar and Thailand on Transport Linkages was held on April 5-6,2002 in Yangon where it was agreed to (a) construct a highway from Moreh in India to Mae Sot in Thailand through Bagan in Myanmar to be completed within two years; (b) promote a highway from Kanchanaburi in Thailand to Dewei Deep Sea Port in Myanmar and shipping links to sea ports in India. The two Task Forces set up to look into the technical and financial aspects held their first meetings in Yangon in December 2002.

(v) There are proposals for upgrading two more roads in Myanmar from Mizoram. The routes are Rih-Tiddim and Rih-Falam that are expected to provide better connectivity for promoting movement of people and goods.

VI. Nepal:

Government of India provides a generous aid package to Nepal with an average annual budget of about Rs. 60 to 75 crores which is aimed at assisting a friendly neighbour in its socio-economic development and generating goodwill for India. We have undertaken projects in areas of infrastructure, health, water resources, rural and community development, education, etc. some of the early infrastructure in Nepal is built with Indian assistance. Some of our recently completed projects include 22 bridges on the East West Highway which was also constructed earlier with Indian assistance and a major hospital cum medical teaching Institute—the BP Kowala institute for Health Sciences. Several Welfare programmes for leuaiwiy, rehabilitating and assisting ex-Gorkha soldiers and their tarmfces are also being undertaken. These projects, while contributing in Nepal's socio-economic development, also help to strengthen linkages between India and Nepal.

Additional projects in the pipeline and at various stages of implementation include projects relating to improving physical facilities and infrastructure at important border customs stations and check-posts, pilot projects in community development, setting-up of a trauma-center at Bir Hospital in Kathmandu, embankment construction on identified border rivers, and setting up of a high tech Optical Fiber Cable network along the Terai. In addition, GOI would continue with its on-going co-operation in areas of education and welfare activities for ex-servicemen etc.

VII. Sri Lanka:

(i) India Cancer Centre—Government of India has committed US$7.5 million to set up an India Cancer Centre in Colombo.

(ii) Gift of 42 seater bus to Jaffna Teaching Hospital.

(iii) Gift of CT scanner to Jaffna Teaching Hospital.

(iv) Modernisation of existing vocational centre at Kotagala.

(v) India has also committed assistance for supply of intraocular lenses for Cataract operations, supply of four ambulances and setting up of a 100-bed hospital unit in Hatton for the North especially for the Estate workers.

(vi) Setting up of a training and development center in Sri lanka by HMT are under process.

Indo-Sri Lanka Accord

3638. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether fifteen years after signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, India ia projecting an interest in one of the more controversial provisions of the treaty that gives it first preference in the running of an oil storage facility in the eastern district of Tricomalee;

(b) if so, whether the Indian High Commissioner alongwith the Indian Defence Advisor visited Tricomalee and the oil farm since the signing of the 1987 accord;

(c) whether Government have decided to implement the accord fully; and